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a mobile station and a base station. There is no mention in this extract of data blocks or a TDMA packet switched network. The Examiner refers to several other parts of Beming, in the first paragraph on page 3, as disclosing various aspects: "encoding on the RLC level", "user data" and that "user data can be real time (speech) or non real time". However, there is no citation given by the Examiner of anything in Beming which might correspond to encoding user data "from the at least two users into a single RLC/MAC block" as required by claim 1. Note that in the passage from page 7, line 29 to page 8, line 4, and Figure 6, the radio bearer services refer to services having different requirements and not to different users.

Beming does not disclose or suggest a method in which at least one time slot of a TDMA frame is allocated to multiple users. To the contrary, its main concern is to enable different types of services to be handled by a single user. Beming thus also does not disclose "encoding user data from the at least two users into a single RLC/MAC block" (emphasis added) or transmission of such a block in an allocated time slot, as required by claim 1.

Turning to Stacey, this reference is concerned with a system in which data is packetized into 'mini-cells' which are transported within 'minislots', the minislots being subdivisions of TDM time slots. This gives a flexible arrangement for distribution of services with different requirements. For higher rate user data or messaging, upstream slots can be concatenated together, that is, strung together end-to-end. The mini-cells for low rate services may be allocated periodically rather than in conventional blocks to reduce packetisation delay (Column 3, lines 25-47). The minislots can be allocated in contiguous blocks for high data rate services and individually allocated for low rate bit services (Column 3, lines 5-8). Figure 5 of Stacey illustrates a network in which minicells can be relayed or switched between ATM connections (Column 6, lines 36-50). It is noted that the Office Action does not identify anything in Stacey which might be considered to disclose encoding user data from at least two users into a single RLC/MAC block as required by claim 1.

The minicells proposed by Stacey appear to retain their individual identities, given that they can be relayed or switched, as illustrated by Figure 5. Thus, it is submitted that Stacey does not disclose the transmission of speech frames from two users or "encoding user data from the at least two users into a single RLC/MAC block" as required by claim 1 (emphasis added).

Given the foregoing, it is submitted that there is nothing disclosed by Beming or Stacey, taken alone or in combination, which would lead a skilled person to arrive at the present

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invention as claimed in claim 1. The other claims are directly or indirectly dependent from allowable claim 1 and for this reason at least are also allowable.

**Conclusion**

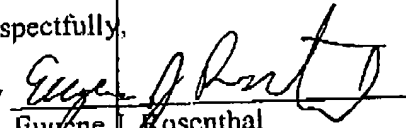
It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action's rejections have been overcome and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited.

If, however, the Examiner still believes that there are unresolved issues, he is invited to call applicant's attorney so that arrangements may be made to discuss and resolve any such issues.

In the event that an extension of time is required for this amendment to be considered timely, and a petition therefor does not otherwise accompany this amendment, any necessary extension of time is hereby petitioned for, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the appropriate cost of such petition to the **Lucent Technologies Deposit Account No. 12-2325**.

Respectfully,

By

  
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